

In the Claims

1 (currently amended). A protective shield for providing a ~~moisture~~<sup>protective</sup> barrier around the puncture site of an indwelling catheter comprising:

- a) an inner bag having at least one opening for placement over the catheter, wherein said opening comprises absorbent material affixed within, said absorbent material formed for receiving an exposed end of the catheter, said inner bag further comprising an adhesive substantially surrounding said opening for attachment to the skin, such that a protective seal can be formed between said inner bag and the skin; and
- b) an outer cover comprising a flexible sheet having adhesive about a peripheral edge for adhering to the skin over said inner bag such that said inner bag is sealed beneath said outer cover forming a protective seal.

2 (original). The protective shield according to claim 1, wherein said inner bag and said outer cover are made from a flexible, fluid impermeable material.

3 (original). The protective shield according to claim 2, wherein said flexible, fluid impermeable material is plastic, polymer, silicon, vinyl, latex, or rubber.

4 (original). The protective shield according to claim 1, wherein said inner bag and said outer cover are made from a material substantially impervious to infectious agents.

5 (original). The protective shield according to claim 1, wherein said inner bag comprises an annular ring integrally formed with said opening.

6 (original). The protective shield according to claim 1, wherein said outer cover comprises an annular ring integrally formed with said peripheral edge.

7 (original). The protective shield according to claim 1, wherein said adhesive is a medical grade adhesive for application to the skin.

8 (original). The protective shield according to claim 1, where in said adhesive is a moisture resistant adhesive.

9 (original). The protective shield according to claim 1, wherein said adhesive comprises a removable strip for protecting said adhesive prior to use.

10 (original). The protective shield according to claim 1, wherein said absorbent material comprises a slit formed for receiving the exposed end of the catheter.

11 (original). The protective shield according to claim 1, wherein said absorbent material is an absorbent paper, absorbent fiber, or absorbent cloth.

12 (original). The protective shield according to claim 1, wherein said inner bag is affixed to said outer cover.

13 (currently amended). A protective shield for protecting an indwelling catheter and exit site from moisture and debris comprising:

a) a flexible, fluid-impermeable inner bag comprising a means for receiving a proximal end of a catheter projecting through the skin, said inner bag further comprising an adhesive substantially surrounding said means for receiving the proximal end for attachment to the skin, such that a protective seal can be formed between said inner bag and the skin; and

b) an flexible, fluid-impermeable outer cover comprising means for adhering said outer cover to the skin, wherein said inner bag is sealed beneath said outer cover, such that a protective seal can be formed between said outer cover and the skin.

14 (original). The protective shield according to claim 14, wherein said means for receiving a proximal end of a catheter projecting through the skin comprises an absorbent material.

15 (original). A protective shield comprising:

a) an inner bag comprising an opening and an absorbent material, wherein said absorbent material is affixed within said opening and said absorbent material is formed for receiving a proximal end of a catheter projecting through the skin, said opening comprises a means for adhering said opening to the skin, such that a protective seal can be formed between said inner bag and the skin; and

b) an outer cover comprising a flexible sheet having a peripheral edge, wherein said peripheral edge comprises means for adhering said peripheral edge to the skin, such that a protective seal can be formed between said peripheral edge and the skin, wherein when said outer cover is adhered to the skin said inner bag is sealed beneath said outer cover, within said peripheral edge.

16 (new). A protective shield for protecting an indwelling catheter and exit site from moisture and debris comprising:

a) a flexible, fluid-impermeable inner bag comprising a means for receiving a proximal end of a catheter projecting through the skin, said inner bag further comprising an adhesive substantially surrounding said means for receiving the proximal end for attachment to the skin, such that a protective seal can be formed between said inner bag and the skin; and

b) an outer cover comprising means for adhering said outer cover to the skin, wherein said inner bag is affixed to and sealed beneath said outer cover, such that a protective seal can be formed between said outer cover and the skin.